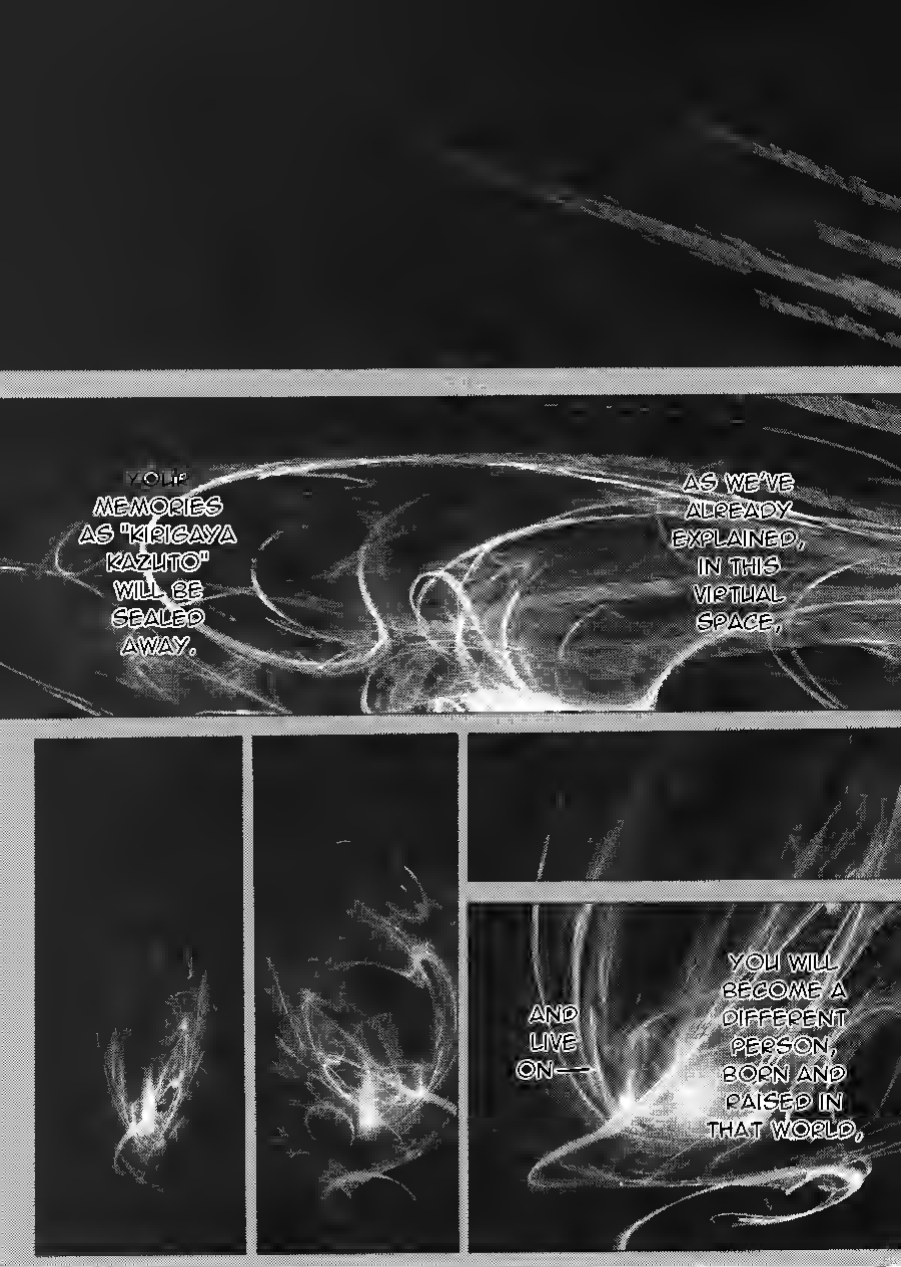
RATH
The long-awaited manga adaptation begins!!
SWORD ART ONLINE
ソードアート・オンライン
プログレッシブ
PROGRESSIVE

WELL, KIRITO-KUN.
THE STL EXPERI-MENT IS BEGINNING. PLEASE RELAX—


YOUR MEMORIES AS "KIRIGAYA KAZUTO" WILL BE SEALED AWAY.
AS WE'VE ALREADY EXPLAINED, IN THIS VIRTUAL SPACE,
AND LIVE ON——
YOU WILL BECOME A DIFFERENT PERSON, BORN AND RAISED IN THAT WORLD,

"This might be a game,
but it's not something you play."
— «Sword Art Online» programmer Kayaba Akihiko

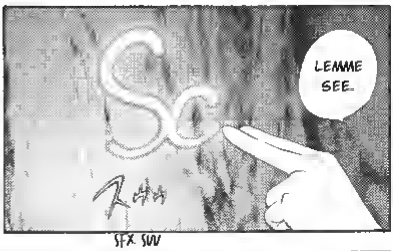
FOR-
TY-
EIGHT!
SFX: THUNK!
FOR-
TY-
NINE!
SFX: THUNK!
FIF-
TY—!

DID YOU DO FORTY-ONE TIMES IN TOTAL?
OUT OF YOUR FIFTY TIMES, ONLY THREE DIDN'T SOUND THAT BAD
SFX PUHA
SFX KA-FING!
SFX TUMBLE

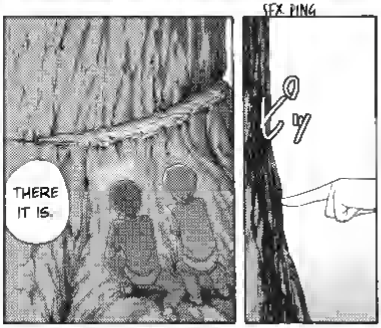
SWORD ART ONLINE
ソードアート・オンライン
プログレッシブ・アリシゼーション
PROJECT ALICIZATION
LOOKS LIKE TODAY'S SIRAL WATER IS YOUR TREAT, EUGEO.
Two boys carving into a massive tree—. The «Alicization» arc manga has begun!
Yamada Kotaro
Original Creator Kawahara Reki
Character Design abec

YOU ONLY DID FORTY-THREE TIMES YOURSELF, DIDN'T YOU?
I'LL CATCH UP TO YOU IN NO TIME.
ALL RIGHT, IT'S YOUR TURN—.
KIRITO.
YEAH, YEAH.

THE «GIGAS CEDAR» SEEKS WITH ITS COUNTLESS LEAVES THE GRACE OF THE SUN GODDESS SOLUS'S LIGHT,
AND CONTINUOUSLY ABSORBS WITH ITS ROOTS THE GRACE OF THE EARTH GODDESS TERRARIA,
CONSTANTLY REPAIRING THE CRACKS THAT THEY CLEAVE OFF.
AFTER MORE THAN THREE HUNDRED YEARS, WE'VE FINALLY CUT THIS FAR.
WHY ARE WE DOING THIS, ANYWAY?
CAN'T BE HELPED, I GUESS
SFX THUD
ゴスッ
BECAUSE CUTTING THIS TREE WITHOUT STOPPING,
IS THE «SACRED TASK» BESTOWED UPON THE TWO OF US.

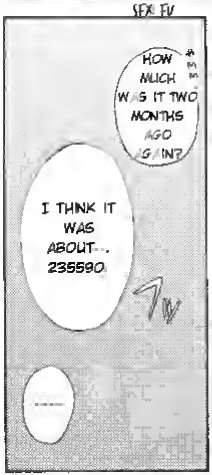


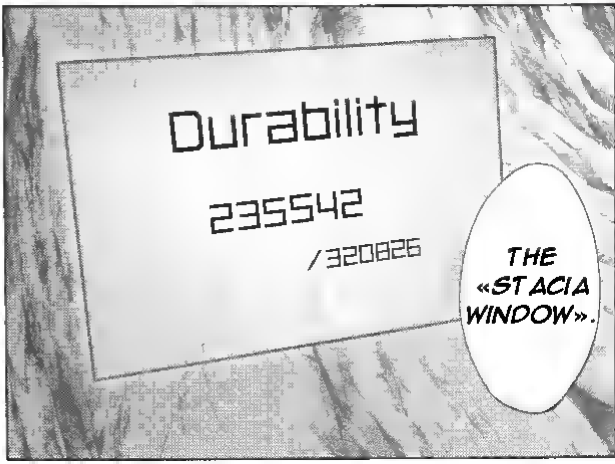
SFX PING



SFX SWV

SFX FV





WOODCUTTERS SIX GENERATIONS BEFORE US HAVE ALREADY LABORED FOR THREE HUNDRED YEARS... ONLY TO CUT THROUGH ONE-FOURTH OF THE TREE.
We won't be able to cut it down within our lifetimes at this rate.
We tried so hard these last two months!
IT ONLY DECREASED BY SO...?!
Eh wa! you knew!
SFX Voo
IF YOU THINK ABOUT IT A LITTLE, WE STILL NEED EIGHTEEN MORE GENERATIONS, OR NINE HUNDRED YEARS MORE TIME.
IT'S A GIANT TREE FAMOUS FOR BEING IRON-HARD, AFTER ALL
WORRY A LITTLE MORE ABOUT HOW WE DEAL WITH THIS UNREASONABLE JOB!
Hey— You—
WHY DO YOU LOOK SO MUCH LIKE AN HONOR STUDENT?!
SFX Vooo
HEY—! YOU GUYS ARE SLACKING OFF AGAIN, AREN'T YOU!
!
TASTE MY COUNTER-ATTACK!
UGYA, YOU-.
UWA! WHAT'RE YOU DOING, WHY YOU!
SFX GRAB, SMASH

Whoa
Uh oh
HE... HEY, ALICE.
YOU'RE PRETTY EARLY TODAY
I'M NOT EARLY AT ALL.
always come at this time
IF YOU HAVE THE STRENGTH TO ARGUE WITH EACH OTHER, SHOULD I TELL GARITTA-SAN TO INCREASE THE NUMBER OF CUTTING STROKES FOR YOU GUYS?

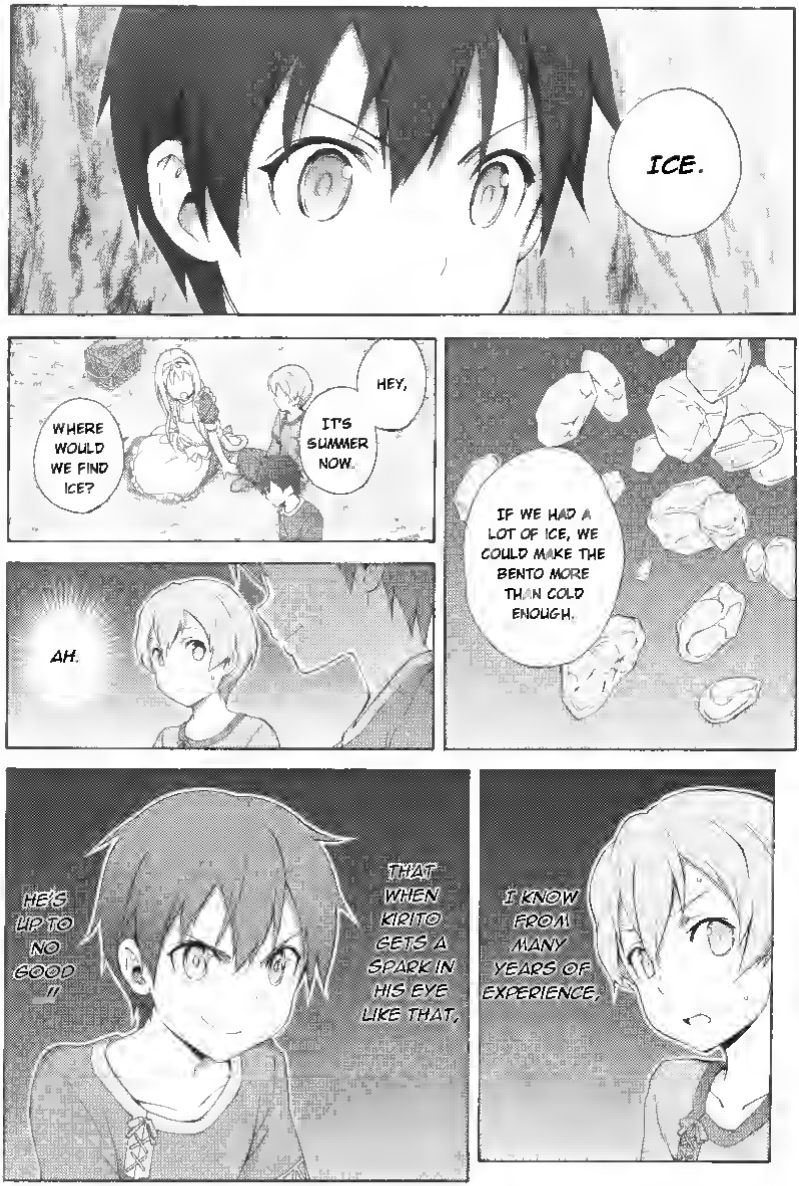
SFX PAT
I'M KIDDING.
COME ON, LET'S HURRY UP AND HAVE LUNCH
N-NO, ANYTHING BUT THAT!
IT'S REALLY HOT TODAY, SO EAT QUICKLY BEFORE EVERYTHING GOES BAD
SFX SHINE
WAIT! LET ME CHECK THEIR LIFE.
OHHH!

WHOA, THE MILK ONLY HAS TEN MINUTES LEFT!
SFX PING
SFX PING
SFX PING
THE PIE'S ONLY GOOD FOR FIFTEEN MORE MINUTES, TOO
And I ran all the way here
Durability 25 / 25
Durability 12 / 32
Durability 15 / 39
SFX CHOMP
SFX CHEWING
SFX MUNCH
WELL, THAT'S HOW IT IS, SO EAT FAST!
BUT YOU NEED TO CHEW PROPERLY!
OHH!
SFX BITE

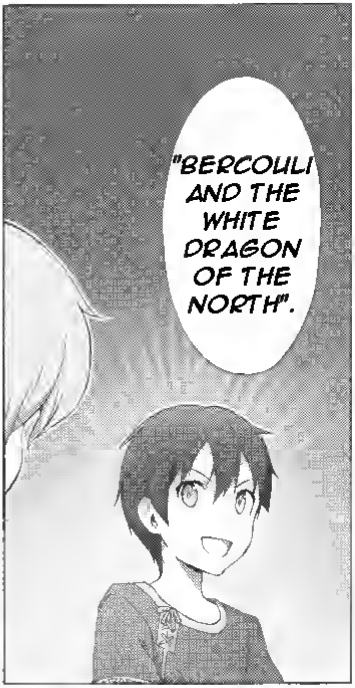
SFX CRUNCH CRUNCH
SFX CHEW CHEW
SFX BITE
SFX CHOMP CHOMP
GULP
GULP
FUHA
SFX CRUNCH CRUNCH
SFX GULP
WONDER-FUL!
WE'LL GET STOMACHACHES FOR SURE IF WE EAT FOOD WITH NO LIFE LEFT
WE MADE IT, SOMEHOW
I thought it had a very delicate taste
R... REALLY.
HOW DID IT TASTE?
YEAH,
ALICE'S COOKING HAS IMPROVED A LOT!
THE PIE TODAY WAS DELICIOUS!
Auntie helped didn't she?
SHH!

WHY DOES THE BENTO ALWAYS SPOIL RIGHT AWAY WHEN IT'S HOT...
EVEN SO—
WE GOT SUCH A DELICIOUS BENTO,
SO I WANTED TO ENJOY IT MORE SLOWLY...
THAT'S WHY I'M ASKING.
IF IT WERE WINTER, IT SHOULD BE ABLE TO HOLD FOR LONGER
I WONDER IF THERE'S SOME WAY TO MAKE IT COLD...?
LIFE DECREASES QUICKLY NO MATTER WHETHER IT'S SUMMER OR NOT.
YOU'RE ASKING WHY... YOU REALLY DO SAY WEIRD STUFF
SUMMER IS SUMMER BECAUSE IT'S HOT.
DON'T SAY IT LIKE IT'S SO EASY TO MAKE SOMETHING COLD

I FEEL LIKE THERE IS
AN EASIER WAY...
HM
IS THERE A WAY...
THAT'S REALLY INTERESTING
ARE YOU SAYING YOU WANT TO USE THE ABSOLUTELY TABOO WEATHER CONTROL ART TO MAKE IT SNOW?
YOU'LL BE TAKEN AWAY BY INTEGRITY KNIGHTS FROM THE CAPITAL THE NEXT DAY.
SEX WHA!
WE ONLY NEED TO COOL, FOR INSTANCE, JUST THIS BENTO BOX,
WITHOUT USING A FORBIDDEN ART, RIGHT?
SOMETHING VERY COLD EVEN IN SUMMER...
LIKE LEAVES OF SILVE...
It's a bit cool though
WHAT IF WE FILL A JUG WITH WATER FROM THE DEEP WELL...

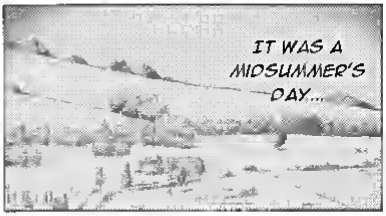

ICE.
HEY,
IT'S SUMMER NOW.
WHERE WOULD WE FIND ICE?
IF WE HAD A LOT OF ICE, WE COULD MAKE THE BENTO MORE THAN COLD ENOUGH.
AH.
I KNOW FROM MANY YEARS OF EXPERIENCE,
THAT WHEN KIRITO GETS A SPARK IN HIS EYE LIKE THAT,
HE'S UP TO NO GOOD!!

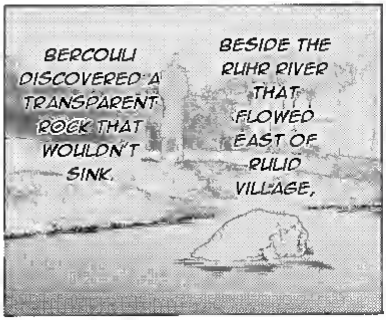
YOU'RE KIDDING, RIGHT!?
HEY, STOP THAT!


"BERCOULI AND THE WHITE DRAGON OF THE NORTH".

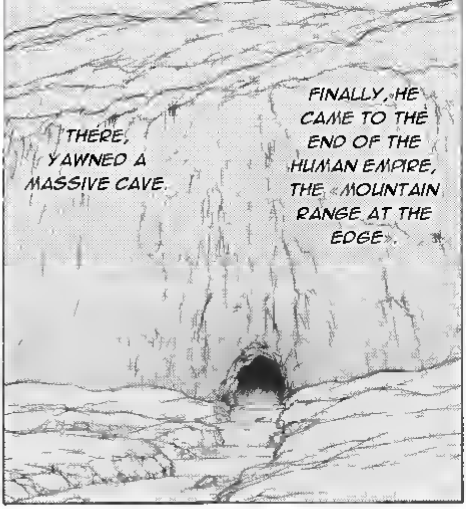
HE'S GONE NOW, BUT EUGEO'S GRANDFATHER TOLD ME ONCE.
THE FIRST GENERATION RULID GUARD CAPTAIN POSSESSED ELITE SWORDSMANSHIP
HE TOLD ME ONE OF HIS HEROIC TALES FROM THREE HUNDRED YEARS AGO

IT WAS ACTUALLY A LUMP OF ICE.
STUNNED, HE FOLLOWED THE RIVER INTENTLY, WITHOUT STOPPING

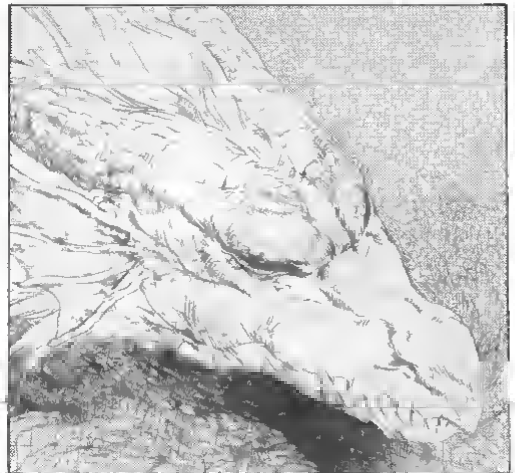

IT WAS A MIDSUMMER'S DAY...


BERCOULI DISCOVERED A TRANSPARENT ROCK THAT WOULDN'T SINK.
BESIDE THE RUHR RIVER THAT FLOWED EAST OF RULID VILLAGE,

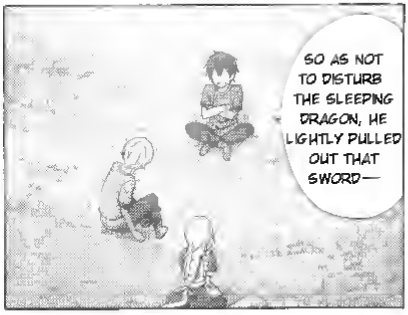
MOVING AGAINST A BONE-CHILLING WIND, HE CONTINUED INSIDE!

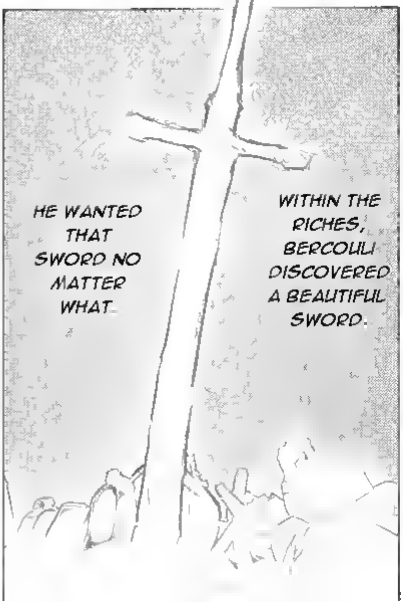

THERE, YAWNED A MASSIVE CAVE.
FINALLY, HE CAME TO THE END OF THE HUMAN EMPIRE, THE «MOUNTAIN RANGE AT THE EDGE».

THEN, WHAT HE SAW WAS,
INSIDE A GIGANTIC CAVERN IN THE DEEPEST PART OF THE CAVE, THERE WERE COUNTLESS TREASURES, BIG AND SMALL.



A COLOSSAL WHITE DRAGON
TOLD BY LEGEND TO HAVE PROTECTED THE HUMAN EMPIRE FROM EAST, WEST, NORTH, AND SOUTH,

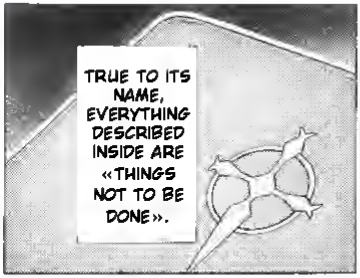

SO AS NOT TO DISTURB THE SLEEPING DRAGON, HE LIGHTLY PULLED OUT THAT SWORD—


HE WANTED THAT SWORD NO MATTER WHAT
WITHIN THE RICHES, BERCOULI DISCOVERED A BEAUTIFUL SWORD.

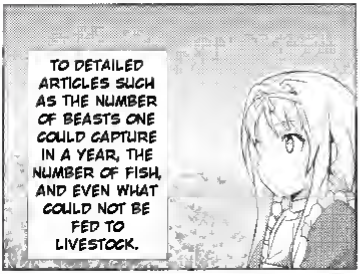
You went to stare at the Ruhr River and wait for ice to come floating by ? right?
Am I floating by ?
Hey Hey, hey
You're saying that.

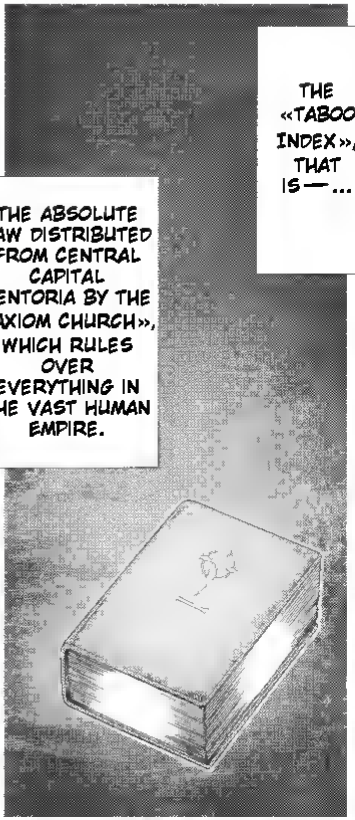
WE ONLY NEED TWO OR THREE
Even so, you
WE'RE NOT LOOKING FOR THE WHITE DRAGON
ACCORDING TO THE STORY, THERE SHOULD BE HUGE ICICLES AT THE CAVE ENTRANCE
IF WE KEEP WAITING LIKE THIS, SUMMER WILL BE OVER
NOT A BAD IDEA.
E- Even Alice is
SO IT'S NOT PLAYING, WHICH IS FORBIDDEN BY LAW, IT'S WORK!
YEAH, EXACTLY!
IF WE CAN EXTEND THE BENTO'S LIFE, IT WOULD BENEFIT THE PEOPLE WHO WORK IN THE WHEAT FIELDS AND FARMS
THAT'S VILLAGE LAW... BUT,
"UNACCOMPANIED CHILDREN ARE FORBIDDEN FROM PLAYING BEYOND THE NORTHERN MOUNTAINS"

BUT, YOU GUYS...
BUT...
IT IS BY *THAT* TOO, RIGHT?
GOING TO THE MOUNTAIN RANGE AT THE EDGE ISN'T JUST FORBIDDEN BY VILLAGE LAW...
THE «TABOO INDEX».


TRUE TO ITS NAME, EVERYTHING DESCRIBED INSIDE ARE «THINGS NOT TO BE DONE».

FROM «TREASON AGAINST THE CHURCH», «MURDER», «THEFT»,

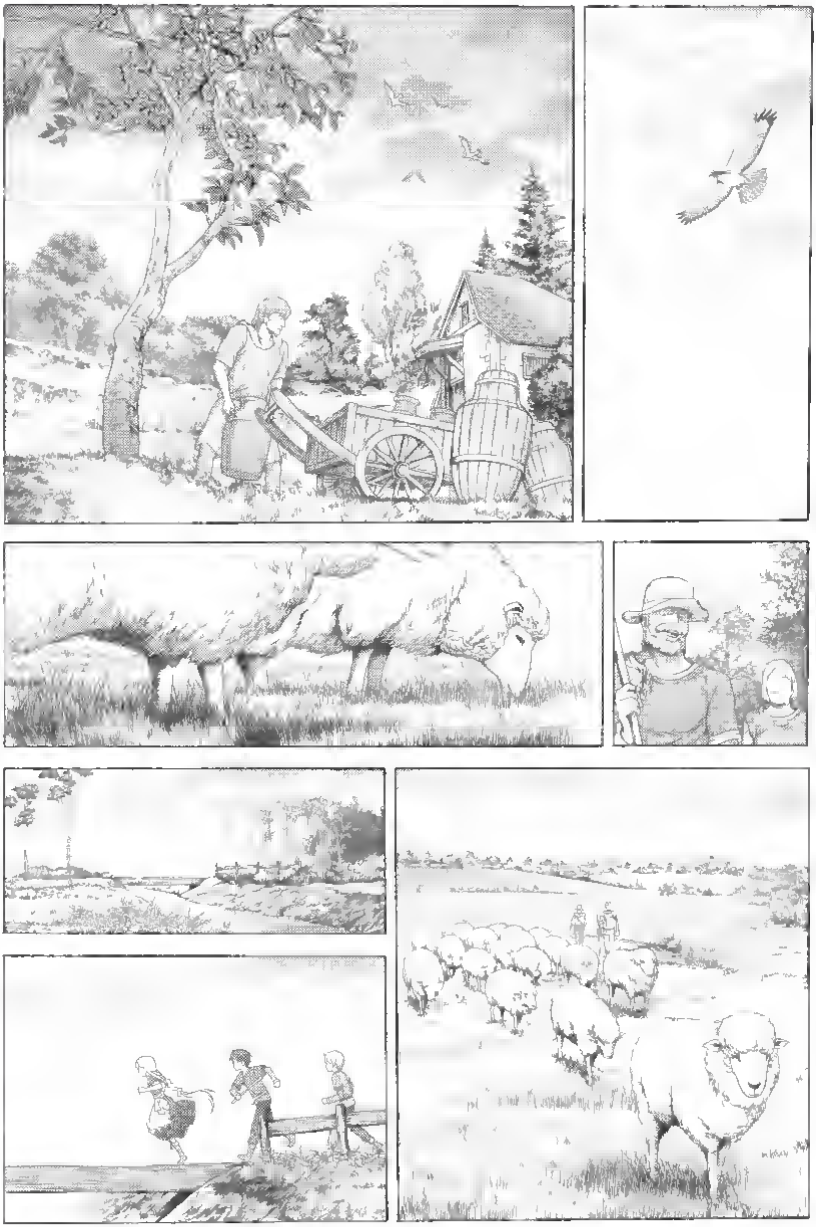

TO DETAILED ARTICLES SUCH AS THE NUMBER OF BEASTS ONE COULD CAPTURE IN A YEAR, THE NUMBER OF FISH, AND EVEN WHAT COULD NOT BE FED TO LIVESTOCK.


THE «TABOO INDEX», THAT IS—...
THE ABSOLUTE LAW DISTRIBUTED FROM CENTRAL CAPITAL CENTORIA BY THE «AXIOM CHURCH», WHICH RULES OVER EVERYTHING IN THE VAST HUMAN EMPIRE.

EUGEO, IT'S WRITTEN IN THE INDEX.
CHAPTER ONE, SECTION THREE, ARTICLE ELEVEN. "NO ONE IS TO CROSS THE MOUNTAIN RANGE AT THE EDGE, WHICH SURROUNDS THE HUMAN EMPIRE".

THE NUMBER OF REGULATIONS EASILY SURPASSED A THOUSAND.

But
The farthest place we've been so far...
is still a huge distance from the mountain range in the north.
EITHER WAY, NO MATTER WHERE IN THE TABOO INDEX YOU LOOK, THERE'S NO RULE THAT SAYS "IT IS FORBIDDEN TO LOOK FOR ICE AT THE MOUNTAIN RANGE AT THE EDGE"
CROSSING THE MOUNTAIN RANGE DOESN'T INCLUDE ENTERING THE CAVE
IF EVEN ALICE, THE BEST STUDENT IN THE VILLAGE, SAYS SO, IT'S FINE!
SEE, EUGEO?
SFX SLAP
WE'LL GO LOOKING FOR THE CAVE OF ICE!
NEXT WEEKEND, WE'LL GO LOOKING FOR THE WHITE DRAGON... NO, WAIT,
ALRIGHTY, IT'S DECIDED!



—They

Were born together in the same year, and have decided that they will die in the same year

In an all-new virtual world, Kirito has created new bonds—?

Always helping each other out, each has sworn to live for the other two's sakes

That days like these would continue forever

Believing

To be continued in Dengeki Bunko MAGAZINE Volume 52

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